The Nature *and* Advantage *of* Trusting in God.

25

A

SERMON

Preach'd at the

FUNERAL

Of the late Reverend

Mr. *Thomas Simmons*,

March 17. 17^{17}_{18}.

By *M. CLARKe*

LONDON:

Printed for EMAN. MATTHEWS, in *Paternoſter-Row*, 1718.

(Price Four-pence.)

W. Musgrave.

A Funeral SERMON FOR Mr. *THO. SIMMONS.*

PSAL. LXXI. 1.

In thee, O LORD, do I put my Truſt: Let me never be put to Confuſion.

IT's a mournful Providence that has brought us hither at this Time. The Remains of that Miniſter, whoſe Face you were won't to ſee, and whoſe Voice you have ſo often heard in this *Pulpit*, are now plac'd before you in his *Coffin*, and muſt immediately be attended to his *Grave*; which will be done, I doubt not by many of you, as in *Stephen's* Caſe, with great Lamentation over him.

This Providence ſpeaks aloud to you; and I alſo am deſir'd to ſpeak to you upon the Occaſion of it; wherein I ſhall endeavour to aſſiſt and comfort the Souls of the Living, rather than embalm the Name of the Dead.

In order to this, at the Direction of the Deceas'd, I am now to Diſcourſe to you upon theſe Words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *In thee, O Lord, do I put my Truſt, let me never be put to Confuſion.* Wherein,

1. He ſolemnly profeſſes his Dependance on God. *In thee, O Lord, do I put my Truſt.* He had done ſo from his Youth up, *Thou art my Hope, O Lord God, thou art my Truſt from my Youth*, v. 5. And this he continued to do even to old Age, for *then* it was he made this Profeſſion in the Text, as appears by what he ſays, v. 9. *Caſt me not off in the Time of old Age: forſake me not when my Strength faileth me.* Some truſt in Chariots, and ſome in Horſes; ſome truſt in their Wealth, and boaſt themſelves in the multitude of their Riches; ſome glory in their Strength, their Wiſdom, *&c.* but whatever *others* do, O Lord, I *put my Truſt in thee*; in which he openly avows to the World, and humbly profeſſes to God, the entire Confidence he has in him; that all his Dependance is upon him, and all his Expectations from him.

In Confidence of this,

2. He humbly pleads for Mercy. *Let me not be put to Confuſion.* Not that he thought God a Debtor to him for his Faith, how much Glory ſoever it gave unto him: He is ſenſible, that the firmeſt depen-

dependance on his Name, cou'd not deſerve the leaſt Mercy at his Hand. The Creature by this lays him under no Obligation; for can a Man be profitable unto God, as he that's Wiſe may be to himſelf or his Fellow-Creature? But relying on the Goodneſs of God, and the Truth of his Word, having profeſs'd his Faith in him, he is humbly bold to plead with him, that he wou'd not ſhame the Hope of a confiding Soul: That others might have no Cauſe to reproach and inſult him upon this Account, as if his Truſt was either miſplaced or not ſincere. And no doubt but he offered up this Prayer with an humble Hope of being heard; and did believe one that was help'd to put his Truſt in God, ſhou'd himſelf never be put to Confuſion.

In ſpeaking to theſe Words, I ſhall,

I. Explain the Nature of this Truſt.

II. Shew what thoſe that Exerciſe it, are ſolicitous to eſcape.

III. The Reaſon they have both to deſire and expect it.

I ſhall

I. Explain the Nature of this Grace, and ſhew what that Truſt is, which we may hope will not put us to Confuſion.

I am ſenſible this is a Thing much better known by our own Experience, than all the Explications

of

of others: That we ſhall have not only a more comfortable, but a clearer and more diſtinct Apprehenſion of it, by being our ſelves enabled to exerciſe it, than by the juſteſt and moſt exact Deſcription given of it by the Words of any Man whatſoever. However, I ſhall offer ſomething towards the ſatisfying this Enquiry.

And in the general it may be obſerved, That Truſt in God, is a Piece of Natural Religion; a great part of Divine Worſhip, indeed, that which takes into its Compaſs the Whole of our Duty to God. In the general it may be deſcrib'd as an Act of the Mind, wherein we depend upon God to remove the Evils we feel, or prevent thoſe we fear, and to beſtow upon us all the good Things we need, with a believing Expectation of a comfortable Iſſue in his own Time.

To ſay we Truſt in God, is in Effect humbly to tell him when we are afraid, and in Danger, we run to him for Safety.

When we are oppreſs'd, and born down by heavy Burdens, we lean upon him for Support. And,

When we are in Wants and Straits, we look to him for Supplies. Having ſaid thus much of it in general, I ſhall give a more particular Account of it in the following Propoſitions.

Prop. 1. God alone is the Object of our Truſt. He is ſo in Oppoſition to all Creatures whatſoever. There's nothing more due to God than this, and it's

it's a Glory he will never allow ſhould be given to another. He has in particular commanded us to ceaſe from *Man*, from truſting in him: We muſt not depend upon his Wiſdom, Strength, Kindneſs, Promiſes and Faithfulneſs, *&c.* *Curſed be the Man that truſteth in Man*, and *maketh Fleſh his Arm*, and *whoſe Heart departeth from the Lord*, Jerem. xvii. 5. It's an Affront to God; for he puts that Confidence in, and thereby gives that Glory *to* a Creature which is due only to himſelf. And what's ſuch an Affront to God, is the greateſt Folly in us; for the Arm we ſtay on is Fleſh, and therefore not ſufficient to ſupport us: Wherein is he to be accounted of, whoſe Breath is in his Noſtrils? Whoſe Arm is but Fleſh? Whoſe Promiſes are ſo uncertain, being himſelf either weak that he cannot, or falſe that he will not perform them? *Surely Men of low Degree are Vanity, and Men of high Degree are a Lie*, Pſal. lxii. 9. He that truſts in Man, leans upon a broken Reed, and his Confidence in the end will be his Confuſion; ceaſe therefore from Man! make him neither your *Fear* nor your *Hope*; let God alone be your Truſt and Stay.

In like manner we are forbid truſting in *Riches*: which how fooliſh ſoever it is, and unlikely ſoever it may be thought, is a thing we are in danger of: Elſe the Apoſtle would not have directed *Timothy* in ſo ſolemn a Manner to charge the Rich in this World that they *do not Truſt in uncertain Riches, but in the living God.* 1 Tim. vi. 17. It's a deſcription of the wicked Man in general, tho' more particularly

larly ſpoken of *Doeg*, *That he makes not God his Strength*, but *Truſts in the Abundance of his Riches*, Pſal. ii. 7. His Gold is his Hope and ſo becomes his God. But this his way is at once his Sin and his Folly. For theſe while they promiſe Reſt, multiply our Cares; and when we are pleaſing our ſelves with Thoughts of their long Continuance, often make themſelves Wings and fly away: or tho' they ſhould continue with us to the laſt, can't profit us in the Day of Evil. Nor is there any thing in our ſelves that ſhould be our Truſt. Our natural Strength, acquired Excellencies, moral Endowments, Religious Performances, we are forbid glorifying in, and accordingly it's the Chriſtian's Character, that *he rejoyces in Chriſt Jeſus, having no Confidence in the Fleſh.*

But tho' this Truſt be eſſential to a Creature, and thus due to the Divine Being, it can never be exerciſed by an apoſtate Creature on an abſolute God; as is plain from the Caſe of the Devils, who believe, but then only tremble at the Thoughts of the God they own, without being able to truſt in him. James i. 19. *The Devils believe and tremble.* We are therefore ſaid to believe in God by Jeſus Chriſt, 1 Pet. i. 21. *who by him do believe in God that raiſed him up from the Dead*, &c. In him the divine Perfections are preſented amiable and delightful to our View; In him we ſee God not only juſt, but merciful, puniſhing Sin to preſerve the Authority of his Law; but ready to pardon it to declare the Riches of his Grace. God finds reſt for his offended

fended Juſtice in his Son; and we find reſt for our guilty Souls in God.

And not only ſo, but our Saviour propounds *himſelf* to us as the Object of our Truſt, together with the Father, *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me*, John. xiv. 1. Where he requires Faith in himſelf, in the ſame manner it is requir'd in God. And we find the ſame Bleſſedneſs pronounced on thoſe that truſt in the Son, which is any where predicated of them that truſt in God. It's ſaid (ſpeaking of God,) *Bleſſed are all they that truſt in Him*, Pſal. xxxiv. 8. and *if his Anger* (ſpeaking of the Son) *be kindled but a little, Bleſſed are all they that Truſt in Him*, Pſal. ii. 12. It being the Will of the Father that all Men ſhould thus do Honour to the Son, together with himſelf; wherein he does not give his Glory to *another*, becauſe he and the Father are one.

Prop. 2. This Truſt is to be exerciſed in God at all Times and Seaſons. It's a Grace calculated for every Condition, tho' more eſpecially fitted to ſome Circumſtances of Life. Therefore thus the Command runs, Pſal. lxii. 8. *Truſt in him at all times, ye People*, &c. in Proſperity and Adverſity, when you are full, and when you are empty: Tho' *he ſlay you, yet truſt in him*; ſo holy *Job* reſolved to do, *Job* xiii. 15. *Abraham* believed in Hope againſt Hope; Truſt God, when you can't trace him; when he hides himſelf; removes your Comforts; empties you of all Creature Enjoyments; and ſeems to ſhut out your Prayers; when he calls you forth to difficult Duties, and to bear the ſoreſt Tryals; Truſt him in Life and Death;

at all times, in all Caſes, and upon all Occaſions. It's never out of Seaſon.

Prop. 3. This Truſt is to be repoſed in God *for* every Thing we need, and *with* all that we have.

We muſt depend upon him for Wiſdom and Counſel, when we are in Doubt, and know not what to do; for Strength and Support under heavy Loads of Affliction; for Protection in Danger, and Deliverance from Evil. In a Word, it's our Duty to truſt God for Time and Eternity, Earth and Heaven, for the Salvation of our Souls, the Reſurrection of our Bodies, and the compleat Happineſs of both in Heaven.

And in like manner we are to truſt God with every thing that regards his Intereſt and Kingdom, his Church and People, his Goſpel and all the Concerns of his Glory in the World. As alſo with every thing that relates to our ſelves, our Perſons, Families, Name, Credit, Reputation, Liberty, and Life it ſelf; all theſe are to be left with him, and committed entirely to his Care.

Prop. 4. God is to be truſted in the way of his Commands and our Duty. This Faith muſt have all the neceſſary Attendants and Fruits of it. It ſhou'd be far from us to think that all required of us herein is, a bold Perſwaſion and ſtrong Confidence of God's Care, when we our ſelves are regardleſs of his Commands, and live as we liſt: We are requir'd therefore to *Truſt in God, and do Good,* Pſal. xxxvii. 3. and to *commit the keeping of our Souls to him in well doing,* 1 Pet. iv. 19. So that this Truſt in God muſt be accompanied with Obedience to all his Commands, and a conſcientious uſe of all proper and

and neceſſary Means for our own Security and Preſervation. Such a Conformity to God's Will muſt always attend our Dependance on his Care, elſe we *tempt* God rather than *truſt* him.

Prop. 5. This Truſt in God is to be exercis'd in a dependance upon the neceſſary Aids and Aſſiſtances of the Divine Spirit. Our Saviour tells us, *without him we can do nothing*; and much leſs *this* Thing, wherein ſo much of the Life of Religion does conſiſt; and which, tho' eaſily ſaid, is one of the hardeſt Things in the World regularly to perform: And therefore when we are ſaid *by him to believe in* God, 1 *Pet.* i. 21. it may be as well underſtood, that it is by his *Spirit*'s Operation, as *his own* Mediation and Interceſſion. By this *Spirit* we have thro' him acceſs to the Father *this* way as well as in Prayer; and no Man can *call Chriſt Lord*, ſo as to truſt in him for Salvation, *but by the Holy Ghoſt*. The Truſt that's warranted by the Word, muſt be rais'd by his Influence. Such is and muſt be the Truſt we may humbly hope will not expoſe us to that which every good Man dreads to fall under. And what that is I come to ſhew,

II. What they that exerciſe this Truſt in God, are ſolicitous to eſcape, and therefore earneſtly pray againſt. Now this is their being put to Confuſion, or being aſham'd; and this either of their Faith, or their Hope. Their earneſt Requeſt and Prayer is, That they may never be aſham'd,

Firſt, Of their Faith in, and Dependance on God. That their Confidence may not in the end be their Confuſion. This is what they know not how to

bear. They are as a Wonder to many, for their Trials and their Faith; Every One waits to ſee what will be the Iſſue of that extraordinary Confidence they profeſs to have in God: and how can they bear the thoughts of being expoſed for their Faith to the Scorn of others, and taunted at as fooliſh Creatures for their Truſt in God? That others ſhou'd laugh them to Scorn, and ſhake their Head at 'em, ſaying, *They truſted on the Lord*, Pſal. xxii. 7, 8. Oh, let us never be aſham'd of what we did herein, as if it was a bold and preſumptuous Thing *for* which we had no Warrant; Or a vain and fooliſh Thing *from* which we cou'd not reaſonably expect any Advantage, and therefore in the end wou'd be Matter of Shame.

Secondly, Of their Hope and Expectation rais'd upon this Truſt. Let me never be aſham'd of my Dependance on God, nor of my Hope from him. Let me not be diſappointed of the Mercy I expected, and ſo made aſham'd of my Hope, either of Deliverance in this World, or of Salvation in the next.

Of Deliverance in this World. God is their Truſt, and they expect and hope for great Things from him. They do not indeed hope for great Things for themſelves in this World; They are forbid, and eſpecially at ſome times to ſeek them; They do not expect great Things from *Men*, nor do they look for an entire Exemption from all afflictive penal Evils in this Life. They are not ſo vain as to pleaſe themſelves with the Thought of an abſolute Freedom from Temptations of any kind, whilſt

whilſt they are in this uncertain World; this wou'd be as fooliſh a Thing as for a Man that puts to Sea for a long Voyage, to imagine he ſhall meet with no Storms, when his Buſineſs is to provide himſelf with all Things neceſſary to weather them. They know that thro' manifold Tribulations they muſt enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. They have therefore no ſuch Hopes as theſe, if they had, they wou'd indeed be aſham'd.

But they do hope for all neceſſary Supplies and Comfort under their Trials; that God will be a very preſent Help to them in the Time of Trouble; if he cauſe them to paſs thro' Fire and Water, that he will be with them there; that till he remove the Temptation, he will give them Strength to bear it, and in his own time a happy Eſcape out of it. That thoſe Waters which come into their Soul, and threaten to overwhelm them, in due time ſhall be aſſwaged. If Providences are dark and cloudy, they hope to ſee fair Weather coming from the Promiſes; and tho' they walk in Trouble, that God will revive them: That he will give them Beauty for Aſhes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, the Garments of Praiſe for the Spirit of Heavineſs; Theſe Things they *do* hope for, and humbly pray that they may not be diſappointed of their Hopes; that they may not miſs the Bleſſing they expected from God, and depended upon receiving, as promiſed to thoſe that Truſt in him. But eſpecially,

They deſire they may not be aſham'd of their Hope of Salvation in the other World: " *But have* " *Confidence before the Lord at his coming.* 1 John ii. 28.

" 28. *q. d.* When I come into the other World, and " ſhall ſtand at his Tribunal, who judges without " Reſpect of Perſons, where I am to receive the " final and deciſive Sentence, let me not then be " put to Confuſion. Let me not at that time when " I come big with Hopes of finding the Judge my " Friend, of being acquitted at his Bar, and re- " ceiv'd into his Kingdom, let me not then be a- " ſham'd of my Hope, and inſtead of hearing thoſe " raviſhing Words, *Come thou bleſſed of my Father*, &c. " be confounded by that dreadful Doom, *Depart* " *from me ye curſed*, &c. and when I pleas'd my ſelf " with the Hopes of the Judge's Favour, be told he " never knew me. Oh, let me not thus be put to " Confuſion. What Lord wou'd more effectually " fill me with Shame, than to meet with a Curſe " where I hop'd for a Bleſſing? and be forbid the " bliſsful Preſence into which I thought to be ad- " mitted? And inſtead of thoſe Joys I reckon'd " ſo much upon, be doom'd to the Torments I ne- " ver ſuſpected? Lord, I truſted in thee, I hope " I did ſo, and that truly tho' imperfectly, let me " not then be put to Confuſion; ſhame not my " Truſt either here or hereafter; let my Innocency " be vindicated and clear'd up in the Day when all " Things will be made manifeſt, from thoſe Miſts " and Clouds that here obſcur'd it; let it then ap- " pear, tho' I was not perfect, I was upright, and " kept my ſelf from the great Tranſgreſſion. *Pſal.* " xix. 13. Then let my Reproaches be roll'd away, " and my Righteouſneſs be brought forth as the " Light." I come now to

III.

III. The Reaſon and Encouragement which they that truſt in God have both to *deſire* and *expect* this. And here I ſhall ſhew

1. The Reaſon they have to *deſire* it. Now this is obvious to every one, and needs not to be long inſiſted on. No Man cares to be put to Confuſion. For

1*ſt*. This is a Thing moſt ungrateful and diſpleaſing to human Nature; what we can't bear, with any tolerable Patience, but are always uneaſy under. Shame is the Reproach of Nature, and very grievous to it: Hardly *any* thing is more abhorrent and diſpleaſing to us; no wonder then the *Pſalmiſt* does ſo earneſtly pray to be delivered from this Evil. But in the preſent Caſe, Shame and Confuſion eſpecially is dreaded, becauſe

2*dly*. It wou'd here be ruinous and deſtructive. It involves in it a certain and an eternal Ruin. To be diſappointed here is to be undone; it infers the loſs of all that's valuable and dear: Had theſe no Hope beyond this Life, they wou'd of all others be moſt miſerable; and ſhou'd the Hope they have beyond it deceive them, they muſt (if poſſible) ſtill be more miſerable, ſince as nothing more expoſes us to Shame than the diſappointment of our Hopes, ſo of all others the Hopes of Salvation. *The Troops of* Tema *were aſham'd, becauſe they had hoped*, Job vi. 19. Where they expected Floods of Water, they met with Heaps of Sand; and this made them aſham'd. What Confuſion then muſt he be fill'd with, who look'd for Glory and Honour, Immortality and Eternal Life, but meets with Indignation and

Wrath,

Wrath, Tribulation and Anguiſh? That miſſes a Happineſs he fully expected, and finds the Torments he never dreamt of? No wonder then to hear the *Pſalmiſt* offering up ſuch a Requeſt as this to God; Oh, let me not be aſham'd, and put to Confuſion. He deprecates this with the higheſt Reaſon; if he be aſham'd he is diſappointed, and to be diſappointed in this Caſe is to be undone.

Having ſhew'd the Reaſon they have to *deſire* this: I come now

2. To ſhew what Encouragement they have to *expect* it. What Ground have they to hope it ſhall not be their Caſe? That they ſhall not be put to Confuſion, but be heard in the Thing they fear and pray againſt? I anſwer, they have Reaſon to expect this.

Firſt, From the Excellency of the Object. This Truſt, we are ſure, is not miſplac'd, but fix'd on one that's well able to ſupport it. Divine Perfections are ſufficient Pillars to bear up the Believer's Soul; and he that leans upon theſe can never ſink. What may not be hoped for from a God! A Being of unſearchable Wiſdom, almighty Power, invariable Truth, and of boundleſs Mercy and Goodneſs? When we rely upon the Conduct of Omniſciency, we have more for our direction than the Wiſdom, not only of all the Men on Earth, but of all the Angels in Heaven: we run no hazard in truſting him in whom *there is everlaſting Strength*, Iſa. xxvi. 4. We may ſafely depend upon that *Mercy* which is above the Heavens, and endures for ever. It's impoſſible to be deceiv'd, when we hope in the Promiſe of one

that

that cannot lie. The *Prophet* puts it upon this, or rather our Saviour himſelf, for a greater than *Iſaiah* is here, when he ſays *the Lord God will help me, therefore I ſhall not be confounded, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed*, Iſai. l. 7. The *Apoſtle* alſo puts it upon this in his own Caſe, *Nevertheleſs I am not aſhamed, for I know whom I have believed:* What manner of Perſon he is, one every way fitted for his great Undertaking; one that's mighty to Save; who is well able to keep that which I have committed to him; I ſhall never be aſhamed of my Truſt in him, or of my Expectations from him. We are often aſhamed of our Truſt in other Things, of our Hope, and Expectations from Creatures. Theſe are Ciſterns that can't ſupply us, they are Reeds that can't ſupport us; ſo far from that, when we lean upon them they run into our Hands, and wound us; we find them weak and feeble, unprofitable and vexatious: Things, that can't profit us, don't anſwer our Expectations, and we are aſhamed of our hope; but Truſt in God can never be attended with ſuch Conſequences, from the Nature and Excellency of the Object. They that truſt in *God* for help ſhall not be diſappointed, they know whom they have truſted, and therefore know they ſhall not be aſhamed.

Secondly, From the Purpoſe of God. Eternal Love deſigns all that for a good Man which the Promiſe gives him reaſon to expect; and this is a full Security to our Faith. We may ſafely hope to receive what God from everlaſting has deſigned to give. He ſays my Counſel ſhall ſtand, and the Believer there-

fore ſays, my Faith ſhall not fail: He never changes his Purpoſe, and for that Reaſon I ſhall never be aſhamed of my Hope; he will never be diſappointed of his Deſign, nor I deceived in my Expectation. The Immutability of his purpoſing Love gives an effectual ſecurity to a confiding Soul.

Thirdly, From the Promiſes of the Word. Theſe are many and great, and run in ſuch Terms as theſe; Iſrael *ſhall be ſaved in the Lord with an everlaſting Salvation, ye ſhall never be aſhamed, nor confounded World without End*, Iſai. xlv. 7. *Fear not for ye ſhall not be aſhamed, nor be confounded, for ye ſhall not be put to ſhame*, Iſai. liv. 4. And again, *whoſoever believeth on him ſhall not be aſhamed*, Rom. x. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 6. Theſe are the Promiſes which God has given us, and faithful is he that hath promiſed; and if ſo, then they are ſafe that have believed. Divine Verity ever has been and ever will be good Security. God will never break his own Word, nor balk his Peoples Hopes. His Truth muſt fail, if their Hopes are deceived; but this can never be. I ſay it cannot be; we have a ſure Hope of eternal Life, becauſe *God that cannot lie has promis'd it*, Tit. i. 2. *It's impoſſible for God to lie*, Heb. vi. 18. It is not impoſſible for Men, even the beſt, the honeſteſt Men in the World, to lie. It's indeed improbable they ſhould, we hope and believe they will not deceive us: But it is not impoſſible, a thing they *cannot* do; but ſo it is in the preſent Caſe, it's impoſſible for God to lie: this is a thing he cannot do; he that cannot lie has promis'd this before the World began; and it's at once his Glory and our Safety that he cannot

not do it. The Pſalmiſt therefore pleads with God, and all that Truſt in him may do it in the ſame manner; *Remember the Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou haſt cauſed me to Hope*, Pſal. cxix. 49. Haſt thou not ſaid he that believes ſhall never be confounded? Is it not thine own Word, that thou would'ſt aſſuredly do me good? Lord I have hoped in this Word: Thou didſt cauſe and enable me ſo to do; and wilt thou at once break a Promiſe of thine own making, and daſh a Hope of thine own raiſing? No! We may be aſſured this he will never do, for faithful is he that has promiſed. He *can* do all he will do, and he *will* do all that he has promiſed to do.

Fourthly, From the glorious Undertaking of our Redeemer. All that he has done, and is doing, gives us the fulleſt Aſſurance that our Truſt in God ſhall never make us aſhamed.

By the Obedience of his Life, and the Sufferings of his Death, he has purchas'd eternal Redemption for all thoſe that obey him, and we are therefore ſaid, *thro' the Spirit, to wait for the hope of Righteouſneſs by Faith*, Gal. v. 5. *i. e.* for Heaven purchas'd by this Righteouſneſs, and therefore our Hope will not make us aſhamed; for what Chriſt has purchas'd at this dear Rate, ſhall never be with-held from thoſe that Truſt in him.

His Reſurrection alſo gives us the ſame Aſſurance. *As he was delivered for our Offences, he was rais'd again for our Juſtification*, Rom. ii. ult. *God raiſed him up from the Dead and gave him Glory, that our Faith and Hope might be in God*, 1 Pet. i. 21. That we might

Believe and Hope, that he who had raiſed up and glorify'd Chriſt the Head, would alſo at laſt glorify his Members; and a Truſt built upon this Foundation, we may be aſſur'd ſhall never make us aſhamed.

His Interceſſion in Heaven does in like manner confirm our Hope. This is ſaid to be an *Anchor ſure and ſtedfaſt that will never fail us, and to enter into that within the Veil, whether the Forerunner is for us entr'd,* Heb. vi. 19, 20. This lays hold on God himſelf, and Chriſt as the High-Prieſt of the Church who entred there as our Forerunner to ſecure our Coming to him; where he prays that our Faith may not fail, and that our Hope of Heaven may not be diſappointed, but that where he is there all his may be alſo to behold his Glory, and we are ſure the Father always hears him.

Fifthly, The Nature of the Act, it being that which is

Warranted by the Word,
Juſtifiable in the Creature, and
Honourable to God.

Firſt, It's well warranted by the Word. It comes under the moſt expreſs Command; it's required of us under the ſevereſt Penalties, and is encouraged by the moſt gracious Promiſes. God has obliged us to exerciſe this Truſt in him, commanded us to do it, made it our indiſpenſable Duty, given us all poſſible Aſſurance of its Succeſs: and has himſelf wrought it, in the Souls of his People; cauſed them to hope as well as commanded them to do it; and after all this, can we imagine, that he will deceive a confiding Soul, ſhame the Hope of one

that

that Truſts him upon the Warrant of his Word; in Obedience to his Command, and under the Encouragement of his Promiſe?

Secondly, It is a thing ſo Juſtifiable in the Creature. There are a Thouſand Things we do of, which we may well be aſhamed: We either *are* ſo, or have *Reaſon* to be ſo. Things that cannot be juſtified; that wont bear telling by others, or thinking of our ſelves, make us aſhamed. Such are Things.

Weak and fooliſh, trifling and childiſh; wherein we act below ourſelves; perform a mean Part, which expoſes us to the Contempt and Reproach of others.

Things, raſh and unadviſed, done in haſte and without due, or indeed *any* Conſideration; theſe we repent of at leiſure, and can't reflect on without bluſhing. Eſpecially Things,

Really Sinful and Evil, directly againſt the Law of God, the Light of Nature, and the Rules of ſound Reaſon; theſe are things whereof we either *are* or *ſhall* be aſhamed: whatever Pleaſure and Satisfaction we had in committing them, there's nothing but Pain and Shame in the review. *What Fruit had you in thoſe Things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* Rom. vi. 17.

But there can be none of theſe things ſaid of our Truſt in God.

It is not a weak fooliſh Thing. Others indeed may laugh at a good Man for a Fool, and banter his Faith as Folly; but he is too ſenſible of the Wiſdom of the proceeding to be concerned at others rallying him upon it: He is well aſſured that herein he does not act a fooliſh Part; he is not left to do a weak Thing; but that this really is, and

at laſt will be found to be, the wiſeſt thing he ever did. He never did better for himſelf, nor more conſulted his own Advantage, than when he did this. *And will not, ſhould not Men praiſe thee*, inſtead of laughing at thee, *when thou* doſt well for thy ſelf?

Nor does this come into the number of Things raſh and unadviſed. Things done in haſte we many times repent of at leiſure, and wiſh them undone: But this is quite of another Nature. In this we may be fearleſs and confident, as the Apoſtle was, in that noble Declaration of his, *Nevertheleſs I am not aſham'd, for I know whom I have believed, and am perſwaded he is able to keep that which I have committed to him*, 2 Tim. i. 12. "I am no more aſham'd of "what I have done, than I am afraid of what I "ſhall ſuffer; in this will I be confident, I will a-"bide by it, and ſtand to it in the Face of the "World. I know what I did when I believed; it "was not a raſh and unadviſed Thing, but done "upon good Grounds, and mature Deliberation. "I am ſo far from ſeeing any Cauſe to repent of it, "that it's what I wou'd do again, were it yet to do; "nay, it's what I deſire to be always doing: Had "I ten Thouſand Souls I wou'd venture them all "this way; I wou'd commit them to his Care and "Keeping, and am well aſſur'd, I ſhou'd never be "aſham'd of what I had done."

Much leſs can there be any danger of Shame upon the account of its being an *evil* Thing. There can be no manner of Pretence for this. It's a Debt we all owe, and an Homage we are bound to pay to our great Creator and Redeemer by the Law of Na-

Nature. It's what God has expreſly commanded in his Word, and that under the ſevereſt Penalties.

Bleſſedneſs is pronounc'd upon thoſe that do it, and always annex'd to this Truſt; and we ſhall therefore be ſo far from being aſham'd of doing it, that we can never juſtify our ſelves in the Neglect of it. To all which we add, That this is

Thirdly, Honourable to God. He does not only require this, but aſſures us he is highly pleas'd with it, that he reckons himſelf glorified by it: *Abraham, being ſtrong in Faith, gave Glory to God*, Rom. iv. 19, 20. And ſhall that which is ſo pleaſing to God, in the end cauſe Shame to his People? Will he reproach an Act, that gives him ſo much Glory? We may be ſure he will not.

Briefly, ſhou'd they be put to Confuſion that truſt in God, then the Promiſes he has made to his Son, and to his Servants muſt be vain. The Father muſt be falſe to his Word, and unjuſt to his Son. The Redeemer's Blood wou'd be ſhed in vain, and himſelf either impotent or unfaithful, or both. The confiding Soul wou'd become the Jeſt of Infidels, and the Triumph of Devils. The Scriptures muſt be idle Tales, and our whole Bible one continued Fable: Faith but a Fancy, and Hope no better than a Dream. But, thank God, none of theſe ſhall ever be, and therefore, he that puts his Truſt in the Lord, we are ſure ſhall never be put to Confuſion.

Having gone thro' theſe general Heads, I ſhall improve them under the following Reflections.

Uſe

Uſe I. If good Men ſhall not be aſham'd of their Faith, and Hope, they will be aſham'd of their Fears and Unbelief; Of all their groundleſs Jealouſies and Miſpriſions, their diſtruſt of God's Care, Power and Faithfulneſs; of their haſty Concluſions, that one Day they ſhall periſh by the Hands of their Enemies: That the Lord hath forſaken them, and their God has forgotten them: That their Way is hid from the Lord, and their Judgment paſs'd over from their God. Upon Reflection, they will be aſham'd of ſuch Queſtions as theſe, Has the Lord forgotten to be gracious? Does his Promiſe fail for evermore? Is his Mercy clean gone? Will he be favourable no more? Has he in Anger ſhut up his tender Mercies? They will be aſham'd of theſe Things another Day. God will bring them to acknowledge, as the *Pſalmiſt* did, *This is my Infirmity*, my Sin, a very great Fault, I now ſee it, I own it, I am aſhamed of it. It confounds me to think I ſhould be ſo unbelieving, that I ſhould in this manner diſtruſt the Power and Faithfulneſs, queſtion the Care and Kindneſs of that God who never fail'd a believing Soul,

Uſe. II. He that's truly Religious has really, indeed unſpeakably the Advantage of all other Men. He does that of which he ſhall never be aſhamed; Bleſſed therefore is the Man, that truſteth in the Lord; bleſſed above all other Men, he has every way the Advantage of 'em, both in Life and Death.

In Life he has vaſtly the Advantage of them. He may and often does fall ſhort of 'em in other Reſpects; He may not have the Gifts and Accompliſhments of ſome other Men, their Learning, their Honours,

their

their Riches, *&c.* but in this he far exceeds them all: By truſting in God, he has that to quiet his Mind, and render him eaſy, which theſe Things can't furniſh out to thoſe that enjoy them in the greateſt Abundance; and by this Means he has that inward Peace and Comfort without them, which many others never enjoy with 'em. In every State and Condition of Life he has that to truſt to which will never fail him. If he cannot ſtand by himſelf, he may lean upon the Lord. If his Burdens are too heavy for him to bear, he knows how to diſpoſe of 'em, being not only allow'd, but commanded to caſt them upon that God, who has promis'd, and is able to ſuſtein him. In the greateſt Dangers he can always make a ſafe Retreat. He ſhall not be afraid of evil Tidings, for his Heart is fixed, truſting in God; or if Fears are getting up and ready to prevail in him, he ſuppreſſes 'em this way. At what Time I am afraid, I will put my Truſt in Thee. When I ſee a Storm coming, I'll put in to Thee for Shelter: and in all this, he is not afraid of himſelf; Conſcience will never reproach him for his Truſt in God ſo long as he lives; tho' others may laugh at him for his Faith, and he may fall under the Laſh of their Tongue, he is ſecure from the Laſhes of his *own Conſcience*, and ſo long as this is quiet, the other need give him no Diſturbance. Other Men will be aſham'd of their Truſt and Confidence, of their Hopes and Expectations. They that truſt in themſelves, in the *Abundance* of *their Wealth*, in Men, and make Fleſh their Arm, theſe *ſhall be aſham'd and confounded, all of 'em ſhall go to Confuſion together*; but

this ſhall never be the Lot of the Righteous, for *Iſrael ſhall be ſaved of the Lord, with an everlaſting Salvation; they ſhall not be aſham'd nor confounded, World without end*, Iſaiah xlvi. 16, 17. which leads us alſo to obſerve how much he has the Advantage of other Men

In Death. *Balaam* was ſenſible of this, or he had never utter'd that vain Wiſh, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and my laſt End be like his*, Numbers xxiii. 10. Oh let me die the Death, not of the Rich, the Great, the Noble and Honourable, the Wiſe and the Learned, the Senſualiſt and Voluptuous; no! but of the Righteous; tho' I wou'd live and ſpend my Days with the former, let me die like theſe; let me end my Life with them that have hope in their Death, and whoſe Hope will never make them aſham'd. Who would not die like theſe?

This is the Man the Scripture pronounces Bleſſed. Whatever befalls him, he is ſure not to be aſham'd; he may be afflicted various ways; he may be reproach'd and ſcorn'd by others, laugh'd at and deſpis'd for his Religion; he may be ſlander'd and revil'd, evil-ſpoken of, condemn'd and perſecuted by the World; he may be tempted by Satan, deſerted for a Time, and in part by his God; he may be in great Darkneſs, under many Doubts and Fears concerning the Truth of his Faith, and the Certainty of his Salvation; but he ſhall never be aſham'd either of his Faith or Hope; ſo far is he at laſt from being aſham'd becauſe he miſſes the Happineſs he expected, that he ſhall be ſurpriz'd to find it ſo much greater than ever he imagined. His Hope then is

not

not only anſwer'd, but exceeded; ſo that he ſhall be obliged to acknowledge the one half was not told him. God does exceeding, abundantly above all that ever entered into his Heart to conceive. His Services are requited in a Way ſo ſtrange and unexpected, that it's like a Maſter's attending on his Servants, which is very ſurprizing, becauſe an unuſual thing. *Verily I ſay unto you*, ſpeaking of thoſe Servants that were found watching, *the Lord will gird himſelf, and make them ſit down to Meat, and will come forth and ſerve them*, Luke xii. 37. The true meaning of which aſtoniſhing Expreſſion will never be fully underſtood but in the Place where the Promiſe it ſelf is made good. The Flight is ſo high, that it ſoars above our Sight. Had not Chriſt himſelf ſpoke them, the Words had been like thoſe St. *Paul* heard in the Third Heaven, unſpeakable, not lawful for one Man to utter, nor poſſible for another to underſtand; which fully ſhews the Bleſſedneſs above others, of thoſe that truſt in God, ſince their Hope is ſo far from making them aſham'd by meeting with a Diſappointment, that it will hereafter be every way exceeded and outdone.

Uſe III. It's a ſevere Reproof to us that we are ſo little in the Exerciſe of what is ſo much our Duty, and would be ſo much to our Advantage. What Strangers are we to the Life of Faith! Don't we tempt others to think this is all but talk, a bold Rant, Vain and Romantick, ſpeaking big when at the bottom there's nothing in it? Are there not many things, which betray the weakneſs of our Faith? And ſhew we know but little of the Matter?

May not Chriſt ſay to many of us, as he did to his Diſciples, where's your Faith? How is it that you have no Faith? Why are you ſo unbelieving? How is it that you are ſo uneaſy in your Spirits, and uneven in your Walk? How comes it to paſs your inward Peace Ebbs and Flows as your outward Comforts do? *They that Truſt in the Lord ſhall be as* Mount Zion, *that cannnot be removed.* How is it then, that you are no more eſtabliſh'd? That you are ſo fearful, and in ſuch doubt, when you have ſuch a full Aſſurance, that they who put their Truſt in the Lord ſhall never be put to Confuſion? Therefore,

Uſe. IV. Let us endeavour to Underſtand the Nature of, and then to Exerciſe this Truſt in God. Learn better the Life of Faith. It's the way the Juſt live; and is indeed the beſt, the nobleſt, the moſt excellent way of Living; moſt honourable to God and moſt comfortable to our ſelves: this will keep us in a ſtate of Peace here, and bring us to a ſtate of Glory and Happineſs hereafter, for according to this Prayer, having put our Truſt in the Lord, we may be aſſur'd, that we ſhall never be put to Confuſion.

This was the humble Hope and Confidence of our worthy Brother, whoſe Death we now lament. He was help'd to apply theſe Words to himſelf, and found Comfort in them, both in Life and Death; he could humbly appeal to God concerning the Sincerity of his Truſt, and hoped to find the Advantage of it; that it would not make him aſhamed. Of *this* our deceaſed Brother, I know you expect I

ſhould

ſhould ſay ſomething. *Without* this I believe many would be greatly diſappointed, and I don't know but by it, ſome may be offended; either becauſe I ſay too much or not enough.

I ſay to you, as the Sons of the Prophet ſaid to *Eliſha* concerning the Tranſlation of *Elijah*, do you not know that the Lord has taken away your Head to Day? You do know this: we all know it, but do we conſider it? That we lament this Day, the Loſs

Of a *Miniſter*. Not of a private Chriſtian only: tho' when even ſuch are taken away, when the godly Man ceaſeth we may well cry out as the *Pſalmiſt* does, *Help Lord!* Pſal. xii. 1. But we bewail the loſs of a Miniſter; One whoſe Work and Office was to Teach and Inſtruct the Ignorant, to warn Men of their Danger, reprove them for their Faults, exhort them to their Duty, comfort them under their Afflictions and Diſtreſſes; to ſhew unto them the way of Salvation: Here's a Light put out, a Veſſel broken, into which God had put the Treaſure of the Goſpel, a Shepherd ſmitten that was wont to go in and out before the Sheep, and under whoſe Miniſtry they found Paſture. It's the Loſs of a *Miniſter* you lament; God has taken away your Shepherd from you this Day: He no longer is to be your Teacher and Inſtructor, you ſhall never ſee his Face, nor hear his Voice more, and ſhou'd not Sorrow fill your Heart for the Loſs of a Miniſter? Eſpecially when it's the Loſs

Of an *able, uſeful, skilful* Miniſter; not one of mean and common Attainments, but eminently qualified and fitted for his Work; one that was indeed a Workman,

man, who needed not to be aſhamed, that knew how to divide the Word aright, and give to every Man his Portion; one that had a great Compaſs of Learning; having had the Advantage of a liberal Education both at Home and Abroad, beſides the Happineſs of a good Genius; one that had conſiderable Gifts and Attainments, and an extenſive Capacity for the Service of Chriſt and his Church. Such a Miniſter we have loſt. And to make it the greater,

It's the Loſs not of an *aged* Miniſter, of one that had reached the common Stage of Life, and was worn out with Labour and Age, that had out-liv'd his Strength and Capacity for Publick Service; the Death of ſuch a one might in a Courſe of Nature have been expected, and wou'd not have been ſo afflicting. But this is not the Caſe here; if we don't lament the Death of a young Miniſter, nor do we that of an old one, whoſe Sun was in its decline, and ready to ſet; we are depriv'd of one in the midſt of his Years, the Prime and Vigour of his Age, having reach'd little more than Forty; and therefore one that according to the common Courſe of Nature, might have lived many Years for the Comfort of his Family, and the Benefit of the Church, this makes the Stroke ſo much the heavier.

And as *You* have loſt a Miniſter, ſo

His *Family* has loſt its *Head*. Don't they know this? Are they inſenſible of it? Can they be unaffected with it? Is it not a Blow that cuts deep, and wounds in the moſt ſenſible Part? They have loſt, in him, a Husband, a Father, a Brother; and muſt they

they not be deeply affected with it? Will they not lament for him, and drop a Tear over him, crying, ah, my Husband, my Father, and my Brother! Can ſuch a one die unlamented, and eſpecially by them?

Upon theſe Accounts we are to Sorrow; but do we Sorrow as thoſe that have no Hope? God forbid!

He truſted in God, and made the Lord his Confidence, therefore cou'd pray and hope he ſhould not be aſhamed; and it proved according to his Wiſh and Expectation, for he finiſh'd his Courſe with Joy and Peace; left the Stage without Regret and Uneaſineſs, having done his Part thereon; he look'd the King of Terrors in the Face without Fear and Amazement, took Death by its cold Hand with a calm Mind, and welcom'd the Meſſage it brought: tho' he had as much reaſon as many others to deſire Life, conſidering his Age, Circumſtances, Family, *&c.* yet to depart and be with Chriſt, for him was much better.

Having received the Sentence of Death within himſelf, how he ſubmitted to it, and with what Serenity of Mind he compos'd himſelf to die, let his ſolemn Farewel to his Family and Friends, the good Counſel he gave them, and the Bleſſing with which he bleſs'd them in the Name of the Lord, teſtify; and may this never be forgotten; may it always be remembered and practiſed by thoſe that heard it.

Whatever you ſaw in him that was Vertuous and Praiſe-worthy, tranſcribe in your Hearts and Lives; and if any thing was otherwiſe (for who have not

their

their *Nævi?* Miniſters tho' called Angels, no more live like them without *Faults* than *Food)* let that be buried in his Grave.

To conclude. By this Providence God ſpeaks aloud to us all; to his Family, to this Church, to his Brethren: And may this ſad Event be ſanctified to us all, and thoſe more eſpecially concern'd therein be ſupported under it. It's only the Grace of that God whoſe Hand has done this, that can turn ſuch an Affliction to our ſpiritual Benefit, and make the Death of our Friends, and eſpecially our Miniſters, the Life of our Souls. To him therefore let us look, that this Chaſtening which is not in it ſelf joyous but grievous, may afterwards yield the peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs to thoſe that are exerciſed thereby.

BRITISH MUSEUM

FINIS.